

PART I: AMERICAN PERIOD

LAMANITISH ARROWS AND EAGLES WITH LEAD EYES: TALES OF THE FIRST RECORDED EXPLORATIONS IN AN ILLINOIS VALLEY HOPEWELL MOUND

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Two of the first historically recorded pioneer mound excavations in the lower Illinois Valley area were undertaken in 1834 and 1840 at Naples-Russell Mound #8, an imposing bluff-top mortuary structure situated on the Illinois River bluffs in Pike County. Historical documents that discuss the early explorations there are evaluated below in light of recent professional excavations at the site to help interpret the structure and function of this imposing Middle Woodland mortuary feature.

Introduction

Archaeological test excavations and mound-restoration work conducted by the Center for American Archeology between 1986 and 1990 at several Middle Woodland mound groups in the Pike County Conservation Area, in advance of proposed highway construction there, included restoration and evaluation of Naples-Russell Mound #8 (also called Naples 8), the largest bluff-top mound in the lower Illinois Valley. Our 1990 transit-generated topographic map of this imposing structure indicated that it measured some 54 m (E–W) x 26 m (N–S), excluding its central ramp-like southern extension, and that its east and west lobes rose 7.5 m and 5.3 m, respectively, above the surrounding bluff-crest terrain.

The massive Naples 8 mound contained several relatively small-scale looter's pits that could easily be refilled, but it also had a substantial swale in its upper center (about 14-m wide and 1.6-m deep) and an adjacent ramp-like "spoil pile" generally thought to have been caused by nineteenth-century horse-drawn slip-trenching. Our test excavations were designed to evaluate both the extent of damage from the looter pits in the mound

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and the nature of the supposed “slip-trench.” As part of this work, archival studies were undertaken to learn whether there were historic records of any of the early digs in the mound. This effort was particularly fruitful and is summarized and evaluated below, following an initial summary of our modern excavations at the site.

Recent Archaeological Studies in the Napoleon Hollow Archaeological District

The Pike County Conservation Area (PCCA) is a tract of rugged, largely forested land in eastern Pike County that was purchased by the State of Illinois in 1970 to be managed as a wildlife preserve. It was later renamed the Ray Norbut Conservation Area, and is today managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources as the Ray Norbut Fish and Wildlife Area.

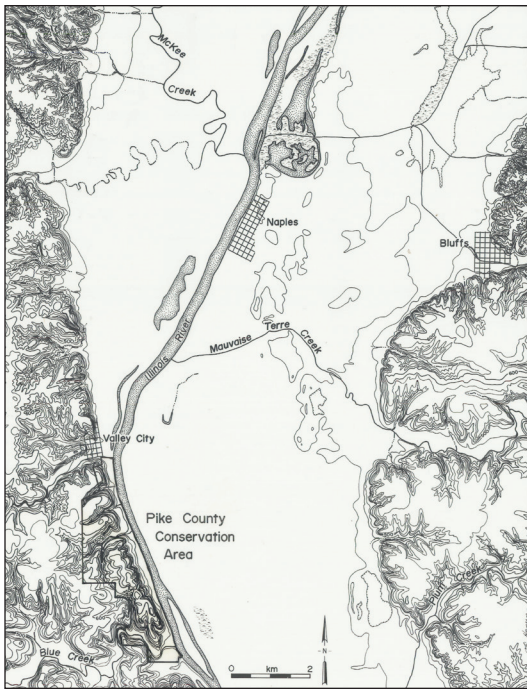


Figure 1. Regional setting of the Pike County Conservation Area (PCCA) in the lower Illinois Valley.

The PCCA is located adjacent to the western banks of the lower Illinois River, encompassing the Illinois Valley’s western bluffs and adjacent uplands just south of the small village of Valley City in Pike County (Figure 1). In this area, the loess-capped limestone bluffs rise more than 65 m above the 6.4-km wide Illinois River floodplain, offering a panoramic view of the valley. Beginning at Valley City, the broad, shallow Illinois River abandons its meandering mid-floodplain course to flow against the valley’s western bluff-base; thus, its shoreline forms the eastern boundary of the PCCA. Downstream from this point, the river continues to hug the western bluffs for much of its remaining 98-km length, moving back out into the central floodplain about 30 km above its confluence with the Mississippi River at Grafton.

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PCCA Archaeological Resources

At the time of its purchase, the PCCA had experienced minimal impact from the kind of landscape-altering development usually associated with modern civilization. Its remote rural location—with forested bluffs and isolated farmsteads connected by occasional gravel roads—seemed an ideal spot to establish a preserve for native Illinois plant and

animal communities. But only six years later, in 1976, the conservation area became the center of environmental controversy when the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) unveiled plans for its proposed “Central Illinois Expressway,” including construction of a twin-span bridge across the Illinois River at Napoleon Hollow that would effectively swallow up the northern third of the conservation area (Figure 2).

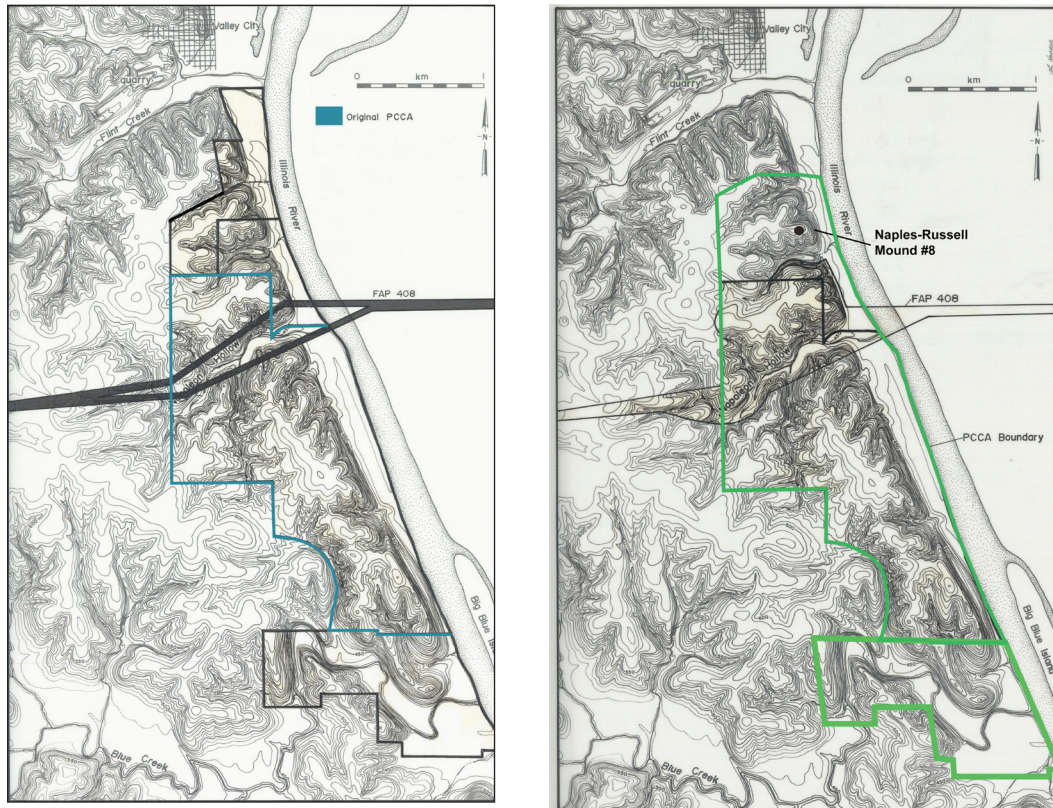


Figure 2. (left): PCCA base map showing Central Illinois Expressway divided route and proposed northern and southern conservation replacement lands. (right): Final revised PCCA boundaries showing location of Naples-Russell Mound #8.

Before starting the work, IDOT made a strong effort to evaluate the environmental and archaeological impact of highway and bridge construction at the planned Illinois River crossing and two nearby alternate routes. These studies documented important and complex prehistoric habitation and mortuary sites at all three proposed crossings (Stafford et al. 1983). With no clear archaeological advantage to switching routes, large-scale archaeological studies were undertaken in the originally proposed right-of-way during the early 1980s (at the bluff-base Napoleon Hollow site and bluff-top Elizabeth mound group: see Charles et al. 1988; Farnsworth and Walthall 1983; Styles 1985; Wiant and McGimsey 1986; Wiant et al. 1983).

In addition to showing the planned expressway route through the conservation area, Figure 2 also shows two “replacement lands” parcels that were purchased by IDOT at the northern and southern boundaries of the PCCA to replace the acreage lost to highway construction. As the figure shows, the originally proposed northern parcel would have extended conservation lands to Flint Creek Valley, just south of Valley City. Just the southern half of this parcel was eventually purchased, encompassing the bluff-top location of the Naples-Russell mound group near its northern boundary 1 km south of Valley City. As a result, the current northern limit of the conservation area is a narrow NE–SW running gravel roadway known locally as Church Hollow Road.

The Napoleon Hollow Archaeological District

By far the most extensive and complex settlement and mortuary remains in the greater conservation area are those dating to Middle Woodland times (ca. 50 B.C.–A.D. 250, uncalibrated). Archaeological surveys and test excavations located large bluff-base Middle Woodland habitation areas at the mouths of Flint Creek Valley (Jeffrey site: Stafford et al. 1983), Napoleon Hollow (Ceisler and Napoleon Hollow sites: Wiant and McGimsey 1986; Farnsworth 1976a), and Blue Creek Valley (Blue Creek site: Farnsworth 1976a). Ten groups of probable Middle Woodland burial mounds have been located on the bluff-tops above these habitation areas, and excavations in one or more mounds near each habitation area (see below) have produced diagnostic Hopewellian grave goods with Middle Woodland burials.

The clustered archaeological remains documented from the Naples Russell group to the mouth of Napoleon Hollow, including a large habitation area and at least 32 burial mounds and burial knolls, were designated as the Napoleon Hollow Archaeological District (Figure 3):

The 30-acre [12 ha] habitation area covers a talus slope between the base of the western bluffs of the Illinois Valley and the western banks of the nearby Illinois River; it also extends for a distance up the mouth of Napoleon Hollow itself. [Thirty-two burial mounds] are located on six bluff-crest points overlooking the village. These are known collectively as the Russell Mound Group (from north to south they include the *Naples-Russell* Mounds, the *Florence* Mounds, the *Roy* Mounds, the *Elizabeth* Mounds, and the *Ceisler* Mounds. [Farnsworth 1976b:2]

The village site is composed of four spatial components, each given a separate name: the *Napoleon Hollow* core area, the *Russell Valley* area, the *South Flint* site, and the *Ceisler* site. While the South Flint and Ceisler sites are separated from the major body of the village by areas devoid of surface material, it is thought that this separation is due to flooding and siltation of intervening areas. The homogeneity of the [surface] cultural materials, and the known buried components in other areas of the site, strongly suggest these surface debris concentrations are portions of a once continuous occupation area. [Walthall and Farnsworth 1978:4]

In 1977 the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places determined that the Napoleon Hollow Archaeological District was eligible for National Register of



Figure 3. The Napoleon Hollow Archaeological Complex: Middle Woodland sites in the Napoleon Hollow Archaeological District.

Mounds 1–7 as part of the 1986 restoration project, Naples-Russell Mound #8 (Naples 8) presented a larger problem. We did not “restore” Naples 8 in 1986 because of the great size of the supposed slip-trench in the upper mound, and because we expected that most or all of the burials in the mound would be restricted to deeply buried Hopewellian subfloor tombs located well below the level of the swale “cut.” Plans were later considered to fill the supposed slip-trench, as a means to help protect undisturbed burials by retarding future erosion. But although accounts of limited amateur explorations in Naples 8 dated back to the mid-1830s (see below), we could find no recorded evidence of any such large-scale Euro-American destruction of the mound. Rather than “restore” an area that might actually reflect the great structure’s original prehistoric shape, a test-excavation project was designed and carried out in 1990 to investigate the extent of modern disturbance to the mound (Figures 4–6).

Historic Places listing. Following the determination of eligibility, an excavation plan was prepared for the endangered site areas (Walthall and Farnsworth 1978). Outside the highway construction corridor itself, the mounds in the Napoleon Hollow Archaeological District were evaluated to assess the amount of looter damage they had suffered while in private ownership and to restore them as much as possible to their original form before incorporating the exchange lands into the conservation area. The bulk of this mound restoration work (“Operation Round Mound”) was undertaken by the Center for American Archeology in 1986.

Restoration and Study of the Naples-Russell Mound Group

Although restoration work was completed at Naples-Russell

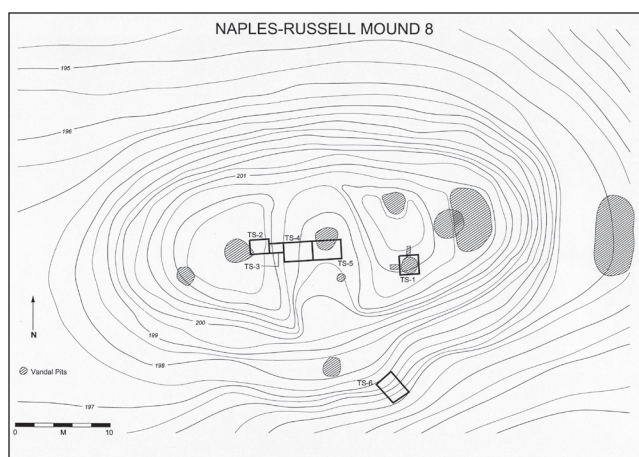


Figure 4. Topographic map of Naples-Russell Mound #8, showing the location of vandal pits and 1990 C.A.A. test excavation units.

These excavations were summarized in a technical report submitted to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (Farnsworth and Atwell 2001), and the report is presently being readied for publication as part of a larger monograph on the results of the PCCA mound excavation studies. The line of test-square excavations across the swale between the east and west lobes of the mound indicated that the mound's shape is not the result of a nineteenth-century slip-trench cut, but rather reflects the original planned structure of this massive mortuary feature. The swale was a constructed access ramp to a central Hopewellian log-lined subfloor tomb structure near its northern end. Although there was an initiating Hopewellian mortuary event in a pit beneath the log tomb, the tomb itself did not contain burials. The adjacent mounded eastern and western lobes served as *accretional* mortuary facilities into which Middle Woodland burials with diagnostic Hopewellian grave goods were placed (from ground level to the near-surface apex of the completed lobes), likely following tomb-based mortuary rituals.



Figure 5. View of 1990 C.A.A. excavations underway at Naples 8 looking west across ramped swale between the mound's east and west lobes.

The Naples 8 accretional mortuary structure may have been used and completed during just the first century or so of the Hopewellian Middle Woodland period in the lower Illinois Valley. A radiocarbon bone-date (QL-4904) was run on a Middle Woodland burial (Feature 1). The Feature 1 burial, uncovered in Test Square #2, just a meter below the upper surface of the west lobe of the mound, returned a C-14 determination of A.D. 37 ± 16 (King et al. 2010). The burial was accompanied by several diagnostic Hopewellian artifacts, including cut-and-drilled bear teeth, river-pearl beads, a decorated Hopewell-series bowl, and a copper adze (Farnsworth and Atwell 2001).



Figure 6. IDOT Chief Archaeologist John Walthall monitoring Naples 8 crew members as they discuss excavation strategy during one of his 1990 IDOT oversight visits.

Pioneer Excavations at Naples 8

Our 1990 Naples-Russell restoration project found that most of the smaller mounds in the group had been nearly totally destroyed by recreational digging activities. We also mapped at least nine previous serious looter incursions into Naples 8 itself (see Figure 4), in addition to widespread disturbance of the upper meter or so of the east and west lobes of the mound as the result of less-energetic amateur explorations. Some of this digging had taken place long ago, but the most recent looter incursion, involving tunneling activity to a depth of at least 7 feet to avoid notice (Figure 7), was undertaken during the early 1980s and disturbed at least three burials in the upper east lobe (see Farnsworth and Atwell 2001).



Figure 7. Early-1980s looter tunnel refuse (including candle and breathing-tube fragment) discarded in refilled pit on the east lobe of Naples 8.

As a result, archival studies and collector interviews were conducted as part of our 1990 Naples-Russell restoration project to learn as much as possible about earlier mound digging activities there. In addition to documenting some of the more recent digging activity in the mounds, these inquiries and studies highlighted the fact that the largest mound of the group (Naples 8) had figured prominently in the early Euro-American settlement history of the region and had been the site of some very early and unusually well-reported casual excavations during the late 1830s and early 1840s. The excavations had recovered at least two Hopewellian burials in the 7.5-m and 5.3-m east and west lobes of the mound and had taken place well before Ephraim G. Squier and Edwin H. Davis published their pioneer mound excavation study (*Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley*) as Smithsonian Institution *Contributions to Knowledge* #1 in 1848.

Mormon Excavations at Naples 8 on June 3, 1834

The earliest recorded excavations in Naples 8 were associated with the well-documented Zion's Camp Trail crossing of the Illinois River at Philips Ferry (at the present-day site of Valley City) on June 2, 1834, by a group of about 200 members (and 20 baggage wagons) of the Church of the Latter-day Saints, led by their prophet, Joseph Smith. Their expedition, from Kirtland, Ohio, was traveling to Jackson County, Missouri, in an effort to recover property from which members of their faith had been forcefully ejected in 1833. According to Lachlan Mackay (personal communication, 2010), most of the members of the Zion's Camp expedition had not lived in Missouri. The church had two main communities in the early 1830s, one at Kirtland, Ohio, and one in Missouri. When members in Jackson County were driven out, men from the sister community in Ohio attempted to come to their aid.

As documented by Jelks (1983, 1986) and Riley (1993:27), the Mormon party crossed the Illinois River at Philips Ferry, just a kilometer north of the Naples-Russell mound group. Smith and his group were so impressed by the dramatic size and towering location of the Naples-Russell Mound #8 earthwork that several of them spent part of the next morning (Tuesday, June 3) visiting the mound and digging there. A fanciful artist's interpretation of that morning's dig 176 years ago was published in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in 1853 (Vol. 6 #35:610) (see Figure 8) as part of an unsympathetic short history of the rise of Mormonism printed by the magazine. Smith's journal description

of the condition of the mound as they found it and of the burial they uncovered atop Mound #8 that morning in 1834 was fairly straightforward and is historically useful.



Figure 8. Artist's interpretation of the Joseph Smith Mormon excavation into Naples 8 on June 3, 1834, published in the April 1853 issue of Harper's New Monthly Magazine.

Early Mormon Historical Interpretation of Ancient Illinois

The repeated Mormon journal entries and references (discussed below) to the “Zelph” burial from Mound #8 as a battle fatality from a great Lamanite/Nephite conflict reflect early Mormon religious beliefs regarding two sons of a Jewish patriarch, who in 600 B.C. sailed to the Americas after it was prophesied Jerusalem would be destroyed. The sons, Laman and Nephi, grew to be the heads of two great warring tribes: the Lamanites and Nephites. In this Mormon view, the two groups were characterized as dark-skinned (“black”) vs. light-skinned (“white”) clans who became mortal enemies in the Illinois area, where they fought one another in a series of regional conflicts. Their last great battles were said to have been fought in the area of present-day Pike County, in the late fourth century A.D. Thus the Lamanite leader Zelph could be “revealed” to Joseph Smith to have been buried in Naples-Russell Mound #8 (see Bradley and

Willard 1985; Godfrey 1989 and 1999; and Riley 1993:25–26 for Mormon historical overview discussions).

According to Godfrey (1989:47–49, 1999:75–77), Joseph Smith later changed some of his ideas of Mormon historical geography, leaving the significance of the Zelph burial unclear. In 1834 Smith believed the Plains of Nephi were located in Illinois, but after reading J. L. Stephens' *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan* in 1841, he revised his interpretation southward and placed them in Mesoamerica and Central America. In any event, these early Mormon beliefs stand in strong contrast with modern archaeological interpretations and with 1990 C.A.A. excavation data (see Farnsworth and Atwell 2001 fieldwork report—expanded published version in preparation) that interpret Naples 8 as a ceremonial mortuary center for regional Hopewellian populations during early portions of the Middle Woodland period (ca. 50 B.C.–A.D. 100, uncalibrated).

The Zion's Camp Journals

The written record of the day's events at Naples 8 on June 3, 1834, include Joseph Smith's journal, as published in his church history (Smith 1957), and the journal entries of at least six of his followers, a small group of whom visited the mound with him and participated in the dig near the top of the earthwork. The event is mentioned in more or less detail in the journals of Levi Hancock, Heber Kimball, Ruben McBrady, Moses Martin, George Smith, and Wilford Woodruff (manuscripts curated at Brigham Young University and the LDS Church historian's office, Salt Lake City). In large part, the entries closely follow Smith's primary account. But some include independent information, and are excerpted below with highlighted passages. It is important to note that the accounts of Smith's followers may actually be the primary references (Lachlan Mackay, personal communication 2010). On occasions when Joseph Smith's journals were silent, the accounts of his followers were sometimes rewritten and inserted into Smith's journals for the purposes of fleshing out LDS Church history—thus the close similarity in wording of some of the Zelph Mound entries quoted below. Between April and August, Joseph Smith's original 1834 journal contains no entries at all.

Joseph Smith's account is as follows:

This morning I went up on a high mound, near the river, accompanied by the brethren.

On top of the mound were stones, which presented the appearance of three altars having been erected one above the other, according to the ancient order; and the remains of bones were strewn over the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel and a hoe and *removing the earth to a depth of about one foot, discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs the stone point of a Lamanitish arrow, which evidently produced his death. Elder Burr Riggs retained the arrow.* .

Subsequently the visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the Almighty, I discovered that the person whose skeleton was before me was a white Lamanite, a large thick-set man, and a man of God. His name was Zelph. He was a warrior and a chieftain under the great prophet Onandagus. . . . He was killed in battle during the last great struggle of the Lamanites and Nephites. [Smith 1957:79–80, emphasis added]

Other relevant journal passages include the following:

Many went to see *the big mound about a mile below the crossing*. I did not go on it, but *saw some bones that were brought with a broken arrow*. [Levi Hancock journal, 1803–1882:51, emphasis added]

We discovered a large quantity of mounds. Being filled with curiosity *we excavated the top of one some two feet when we came on the bones of an extraordinarily large person*. . . . It was felt that this man would have been 8 or 9 feet high. In the trunk of his skeleton near the vitals we found a large stone arrow, which I suppose brought him to his end. . . . Thus we found those mounds to be deposits for the dead which had fallen, no doubt in some great battle. In addition to this, we found *many large fortifications*, which denotes a civilization . . . which had fallen by wars and commotion. [Moses Martin journal, 1834:7, emphasis added]

On Tuesday, the 3d, several of us went up with the Prophet to the top of a Mound on the bank of the Illinois River, which was several hundred feet above the river. . . . On top of this mound there was the appearance of three altars, which had been built of stone, one above the other, according to the ancient order; and the ground was strewn with human bones. . . . At about one foot in depth we discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire; and between two of his ribs *we found an Indian arrow*, which had evidently been the cause of his death. We took the leg and thigh bones and carried them to Clay County. . . . *Brother Brigham Young has yet the arrow in his possession*.

The same day we pursued our journey. While on our way we felt anxious to know who the person was who had been killed by that arrow. It was made known to Joseph that he had been an officer who fell in battle in the last destruction among the Lamanites, and his name was Zelph.

[Heber Kimball journal, Whitney 1888:60–61, emphasis added]

This morning [Tuesday, June 3] I went up on a high mountain near the river accompanied by many of the [brethren]. *On the tops of the mounds were stones* which personated the appearance of three altars, one above the other, according to the ancient order, and the remains of bones [strewn] over the surface of the ground . . . we had a shovel and a hoe with us, and *while we were [descending] the mound, the Prophet Joseph stopped suddenly and pointed to the ground and said “[Brethren dig in [there].”* And when we had dug one foot we uncovered the skeleton of a man, and between his ribs *in the backbone was found the stone point of a Lamanitish arrow*, which produced his death. Milton [Holmes] took the arrow out of the back bone,

also one of the thigh bones which had been broken, and took it to camp, and put it into my wagon . . . and I Wilfor[d] Woodruff carried the thigh bone to Clay County and buried it.

[Wilford Woodruff journal 1807–1898:19, emphasis added]

Riley (1993:29) indicates that “the arrowhead was kept by Woodruff’s wife, Emma.” But in a later revised and edited published version of Woodruff’s journal (1881:41), he himself mentions that “the arrowhead . . . is now in the possession of President Joseph F. Smith, Salt Lake City, Utah.”

Interpretation of 1834 Excavation Results

From these various journals, the recorded details of the June 3 Mormon dig at Naples 8 may be summarized as follows:

1. On top of the mound, Smith, Kimball, and Woodruff saw the remains of three “altars” made of piled stones, “one above the other according to the ancient order,” while Martin saw “many large [stone] fortifications.”
2. Among these piled stones, human bones were strewn over the ground surface.
3. At or near the top of the mound, within 1 to 2 feet of the modern surface, a burial was excavated and a large stone projectile point was found among the ribs. One observer (Hancock) thought it was broken. Everyone referred to it simply as made of “stone.” The stone point was carried away as a keepsake, and was variously said to be in the hands of Elder Riggs (Smith), Brigham Young (Kimball), and “President Joseph Smith in Salt Lake City” (Woodruff).
4. The journal entries agree that 1 to 4 bones from the burial were carried away from the site and later reburied in Clay County, Missouri.

These multiple journal entries suggest some interesting structural and historical observations about Naples-Russell Mound #8. First, depending on the identity of the associated projectile point (see discussion below), the discovery of a near-surface burial high in the mound may be further evidence for the accretional addition of burials to the two mound lobes as they were built up in Middle Woodland times (i.e., the mortuary pattern documented by our 1990 excavations), or it may indicate that later Woodland groups intrusively dug one or more graves into the upper portions of the completed Middle Woodland mound (a frequent occurrence at other regional Middle Woodland mound groups, but not documented by our recent excavations at Naples 8).

Second, the piled stones (probably limestone slabs from the adjacent exposed bluff faces) amid human bones “strewn” about the top of the mound, although interpreted as altars or fortifications by Mormon visitors to the mound, appear to be surprisingly early-nineteenth-century evidence for early 1830s (and perhaps even 1820s) excavations

into the upper parts of Naples 8 by curious local settlers or passers-by. The apparent quantity of limestone slabs (often used as part of regional Middle and Late Woodland burial activities) and human bones scattered on the upper mound surface suggests that early casual looter activity was common at the site and that numerous near-surface burials and mortuary structures had been disturbed. Alternatively, it is possible that the limestone slabs were used by the mound's builders to cap its east and west lobes after the mortuary feature was completed and would no longer be used. Today, although

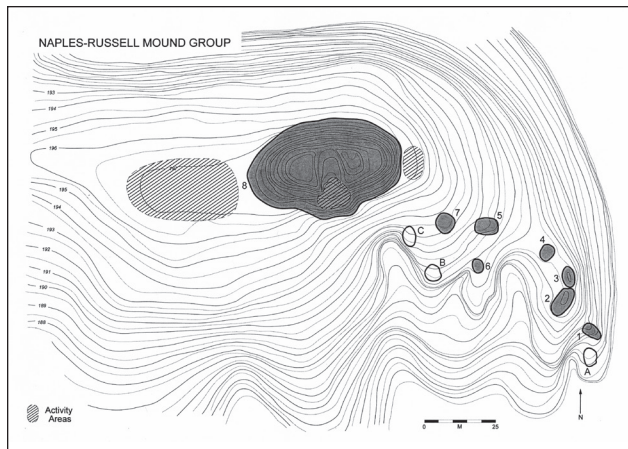


Figure 9. 1990 C.A.A. topographic map of the Naples-Russell mound group, associated activity areas, and probable burial knolls.

the mound site was part of a pasture area in the 1870s and 1880s: see Burns discussion and Henderson photo, below). To date, no archaeological excavations have been conducted in the ground-level limestone-slab area.

The “Lamanitish” Arrow

A good first test of cultural affiliation for the Zelph burial exhumed by the Mormons from Naples 8 in 1834 would be to locate and identify the “stone arrow” found with the burial. While the analysis project for the 1990 excavation study was underway, the artifact was located in the Mormon archive in Salt Lake City by James Bradley, who kindly provided C.A.A. researchers with a photograph (Figure 10a). Although the photo is not in full focus, it clearly shows a $3\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-long *obsidian* barbed and corner-notched “spear” point (i.e., much larger and heavier than lightweight arrow points attached to wooden shafts during the Late Woodland bow-and-arrow era). The combined size, shape, and raw material of manufacture of the Zelph point are regionally unique. It does not appear to have been broken or resharpened. Large flakes were removed to create a heavy, expanding straight-sided blade with prominent tangs and broad V-shaped corner notches above

numerous disturbed bones are encountered in the upper foot or two of fill atop the east and west lobes of Naples 8, fragments of limestone slabs are rare to absent. However, a sizeable scatter of limestone slabs has been mapped on the natural ground surface adjacent to the eastern edge of the east lobe (see the approximately 6-x-10-m “activity area” mapped immediately east of Naples 8 in Figure 9). This suggests that at some point in the later nineteenth century, the scattered slabs were taken off the mound and placed on the ground beside it (perhaps as part of farming activities when

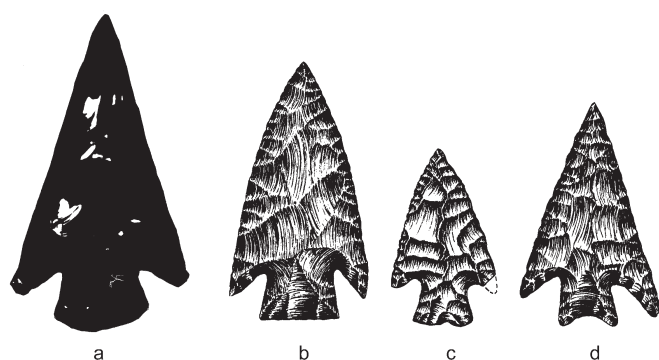


Figure 10. Mormon-curated obsidian projectile point (a) said to have been excavated with a Naples 8 burial by Joseph Smith and some of his Zion's Camp followers on June 3, 1834. Comparative examples of similar local projectile point types (b–d) are illustrated for comparison (Point-type drawings from Perino 1985, 1991).

with a half dozen or so bifacial cutting and scraping tools (all but one from village-midden contexts) and eight notched projectile points. The projectiles are mostly casually made, crude, small “dart” points, often unifacially chipped and made from obsidian flakes or lamellar blades—and only three of them are documented from mortuary contexts. One, from a mound in Fulton County, is a “3 inch square based obsidian knife” (Wray 1938:81–82). Another, casually produced by notching and unifacially flaking a 4-x-1.5-inch lamellar blade, was found in Bedford Mound 12, about 10 miles downstream from Naples 8 (Perino 2006:267, Figure 2.23). The third, a small bifacial corner-notched point less than 2 inches long, was recovered by Henderson from Naples Mound 3, about 4 miles upstream from the Naples-Russell group (Henderson 1884:696, Figure 13d). All three of these points were recovered as grave goods accompanying burials, not thrust or projected into them.

As shown in Figure 10, the only regional prehistoric projectile point styles that in any way resemble the Zelph specimen are the Late Archaic (ca. 2000–1000 B.C.) Kampsville Barbed and Labras Lake types (Figure 10b and 10c) and an Apple Creek point style (Figure 10d), at first tentatively dated by Perino to ca. A.D. 350–550 (Perino 1975) because of similar points of this age from Missouri. But in the lower Illinois Valley, Apple Creek points are usually found in Terminal Archaic contexts and are likely a Kampsville Barbed variant. All three types have straight-sided blades and tangs, but only one, Labras Lake (see McElrath et al. 2009:351–352), occasionally has a slightly excurvate base (as shown in Figure 10). This style is characteristically found in the American Bottom area further south and is much smaller than the Zelph point. No obsidian was regionally used or available in Late Archaic times, and all of these

a straight expanding stem with a flared base. Obsidian *was* imported into the region during Hopewellian times, but 50 years of extensive archaeological surveys and excavations at Middle Woodland habitation and mortuary sites in the lower Illinois Valley area have produced only about 400 small pieces of obsidian, mostly in the form of small sharpening flakes or blade fragments (Michael Wiant, personal communication 2010). From Wiant's ongoing studies, a few obsidian drill fragments are known, along

tanged point types are made from local white Burlington chert (see Farnsworth and Asch 1986; Perino 1985).

From the Zelp point's size, odd style attributes, and unique obsidian raw material (a noteworthy attribute curiously *not mentioned* in any of the early Mormon journal accounts), the photographed specimen from the Mormon archives is likely either a modern reproduction or a western Great Basin aboriginal point from the Salt Lake City area (perhaps an Elko Corner-Notched variety: see Perino 1985:123), miscataloged or acquired at some point to fill a void in the Joseph Smith collection at Salt Lake City.

Daniel Burns Excavations at Naples 8 ca. 1840

Naples-Russell Mound #8 was originally named and numbered in the archaeological literature (as Naples Mound #8) by John G. Henderson (1884:692) (see Figures 11 and 12). Henderson was a local judge from nearby Winchester, Illinois, who had a passion for historical and antiquarian research. During the late nineteenth century, he served as secretary of the anthropology section of the American Association of Science and regularly communicated with senior archaeological scholars at the Smithsonian Institution (Twomey 1985, 1987). During 1879 and 1880, Henderson mapped and explored 8 of 13 Hopewellian mounds located near the eastern banks of the Illinois River on the Bath Terrace at Naples, Illinois, some 12 miles northwest of Winchester (Farnsworth 2004:7–8).

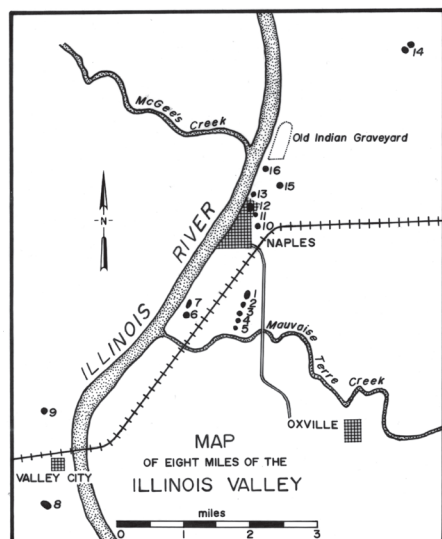


Figure 11. John G. Henderson's 1884 map showing the clustered flood-plain-terrace mounds he surveyed and excavated at Naples, Illinois. Included on the map are two distant bluff-top mounds (Naples #8 and #9) located across the river several miles south of Naples.

Henderson mapped and discussed Naples Mound #8 (located across the river and about 6 miles south of Naples; see Figure 11) as part of his final published report on his mound excavations at Naples itself, even though his Naples Mound 8 is just one of many such structures located on the western Illinois River bluffs in the Naples area.

Just south of the large mound above described [i.e., Naples 8], on the next point, are five circular mounds about 30 feet in diameter and 10 or 12 feet high. Indeed within a radius of 5 miles from Naples there are at least 50 mounds. [Henderson 1884:692]

The fact that Naples 8 was included at all in Henderson's report is a testament to this particular mound's monumental prominence in the region and to nineteenth-century interest in beautiful artifacts from America's ancient mounds in general. The only other mound Henderson mapped across the river away from Naples itself was his Naples Mound #9, located on the bluffs about a mile north of Valley City (Figure 11).

Retaining Henderson's 1884 mound-numbering system (to avoid unnecessary confusion when referring to later work at Naples Mound #8) has required some flexible creativity. Since the last private landowner before the 1990 excavations was Roy Russell, and since there were several other small (badly looted) mounds clustered on the same bluff point, the site became the Naples-Russell mound group (to help distinguish it from the Henderson-excavated Naples group across the river and several miles upstream). The mounds at Naples itself are also grouped in separate clusters, so these groups have been given separate hyphenated names as well (e.g., Naples-Abbott and Naples-Chambers; see Farnsworth 2004:31, 60–65). Luckily, all of the smaller mounds on the Russell property are located east of Naples 8, and they could be numbered east-to-west so that the big mound retained its #8 designation (this worked because three small, possibly unrounded, Naples-Russell burial areas were mapped as unnumbered burial knolls; see Figure 9).

The Eagle with Lead Eyes

Prior to the publication of Henderson's report, Naples 8 was known regionally as the Eagle Pipe Mound, because of a famous effigy platform pipe exhumed by local resident Daniel Burns, Sr., while digging in the mound more than 40 years earlier. Henderson's report of his own Naples excavations, prepared for inclusion in the Smithsonian Institution Annual Report for 1882, discusses this discovery and illustrates both the mound and the pipe (see Figure 12). Henderson (1884:692) indicates that Burns, along with "John W. Windsor, and others" made their discovery while digging in the mound during the early 1840s. This, along with Mormon observations (see above) suggestive of extensive upper-mound disturbance in the mid-1830s, supports a pattern of surprisingly early (and extensive) Euro-American fascination with casual mound exploration. This pattern of early digging is further suggested by Henderson's observation that "this locality has afforded many valuable relics of prehistoric man, and it is matter of regret that they did not fall into the hands of persons who knew or appreciated their scientific value."

The raptor-effigy pipe that gave the Eagle Pipe Mound its local name is a diagnostic Middle Woodland (Hopewellian) platform pipe depicting a side-facing raptorial bird with inlaid eyes of lead (Figure 13b: but see discussion below). According to Henderson (1884:692), it was found with a burial in a small "stone" bowl (6 inches in diameter and 4 inches deep) together with "another bird pipe, a frog pipe, and a copper gouge about 6 inches in length." A biographical sketch of Mr. Burns son, Daniel Burns, Jr. (Biographical Publishing 1891:482), offers some further details of the find, including

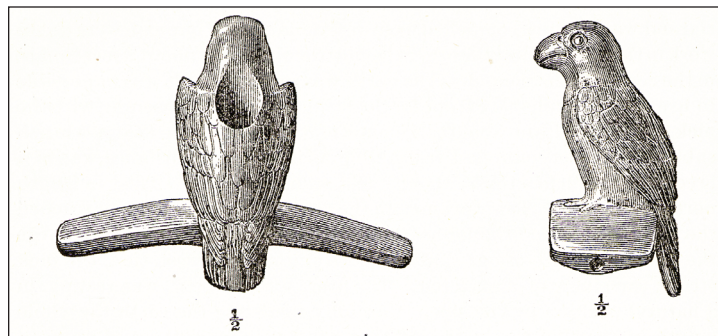


FIG. 6. Eagle pipe, from Naples, Ill.

On the right bank of the Illinois River, about 300 yards below Griggsville Landing, rises a lofty bluff fully 300 feet above the level of the river. On the summit is a beautiful, oval mound, 150 feet long, 92 feet wide in the middle, and 25 or 30 feet high. The following outline, Fig. 7, will give an idea of its appearance.

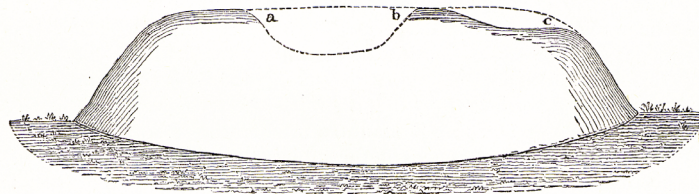


FIG. 7. Large oval mound, near Naples, Ill.

Daniel Burns, John W. Windsor, and others, about forty years ago, were engaged in digging a grave on this mound, when the spade turned out a stone bowl about 6 inches in diameter across the top and about 4 inches deep. Deposited in the bowl was found the eagle pipe, another bird pipe, a frog pipe, and a copper gouge about 6 inches in length. This locality has afforded many valuable relics of prehistoric man, and it is a matter of regret that they did not fall into the hands of persons who knew or appreciated their scientific value.

Figure 12. Naples Mound #8 and an efigy platform pipe found there in 1840 by Daniel Burns, as illustrated and discussed by John G. Henderson in his 1884 Smithsonian Publication.

the fact that his father's "Eagle Pipe" was "cut from blue stone," that it was found ca. 1840, and that the stone bowl and the artifacts it contained "were found at the head of a chief who was buried sitting upright" (likely a flexed burial). From modern published color photos (e.g., Maxwell 1978:39; Townsend 2004:29) and my personal observations of the Burns pipe, it is actually a glossy gray-green to blue-green in color, indicating that the stone material used for the carving was northern Illinois Sterling pipestone (see Farnsworth et al. 2004).

More than a century after it was discovered, the Eagle Pipe itself eventually found its way from Burns family heirs (via the Byron Knoblock collection) into a prominent East Coast private collection (the "Guennol" collection of Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Martin)

and has for many years been on loan for display at the Brooklyn Museum (Acc. No. L49.3.1; Howard Winters, personal communication 1977). The remaining artifacts from this unique burial cache can no longer be located, and Henderson indicated in his 1870s Smithsonian correspondence that they had been lost “decades” before he first heard of them.

Judge Henderson also informed Smithsonian Institution scholars that the Eagle Pipe’s signature lead eyes are a modern embellishment of the artifact. When Henderson first communicated with the Smithsonian Institution about Daniel Burns’ beautiful effigy pipe in the late 1870s, Spencer F. Baird (a naturalist and the first curator of the National Museum at the Smithsonian) pressed him to try to get the artifact for the Institution, or at minimum to send it there for casting (correspondence from Baird to Henderson, February 28, 1877). Reluctant owner Burns would not send it, but finally agreed later that year to have a cast made locally. Baird continued to press the judge to acquire the pipe, finally eliciting this response from an exasperated Henderson on January 18, 1878:

It is no use to talk about it. He won’t part with it on any terms. I forgot, in my former letter, to speak of the eyes. The present owner (Daniel Burns) says, that the original eyes were pearl, and that some one picked them out. The eyes that are in there now, are simply two shot put in by a preacher, Burns says, who thought he was improving on the original.

Effigy Platform Pipes from Naples 8

The three effigy platform pipes unearthed together by Burns et al. (at an unknown depth in the mound), combined with three additional Hopewellian effigy pipes recovered from the mound by a 1950s amateur exploration (Figure 13a), the Rohrkaste tunneling event in the early 1980s (Figure 13d), and our 1990 test-excavation study there (Figure 13c), represent an unusual concentration of such artifacts in a single Illinois Hopewell mound. The discovery contexts of these latter three pipes within the mound provide added support for our 1990 excavation evidence that Naples 8 was built and closed as part of a short-term construction effort associated with early Hopewellian mortuary ritual and spanning only a few generations. We found the frog pipe (Figure 13c) on the roof of a subfloor pit beneath the floor of the central log tomb, later buried beneath 4.2 m of ramped fill between the two mound lobes; the Rohrkaste raven-head pipe (Figure 13d) was taken from a burial he encountered tunneling a little over 2 m beneath the crest of the east lobe; and the raptor/human pipe fragments (Figure 13a) were recovered from the backdirt of a near-surface looter’s pit near the top of the west lobe.

Henderson 1880 Documentation of the Appearance of Naples Mound #8

Judge Henderson’s published line-drawing of the Naples 8 mound structure itself (Figure 12) suggests, without discussion, that the original form of the mound was a loaf-shaped



Figure 13. Four efigy platform pipes recovered from Naples-Russell Mound #8 between 1840 and 1990.

oval and that the massive ramped “cut” across its center width is a historically created depression. He labeled the irregular-depression limits a, b, and c, suggesting he intended to discuss his view that these were modern mound alterations, but the discussion was not included in the published text. The impression has remained, however, that the central swale resulted from nineteenth-century horse-drawn slip damage, especially since there are several known loaf-shaped Middle Woodland mounds in the region (all of them situated in floodplain settings) and no ramped, bilobed Hopewellian mortuary structures had been documented in the lower Illinois Valley area prior to our 1990 Naples 8 excavations. In addition to his drawing, Henderson sent an actual photograph of the “Eagle Pipe Mound” (located in what was then an open pastured bluff-top field) to the Smithsonian ca. 1880 (Figure 14). The photo dramatically illustrates the fact that 130 years ago the mound’s bilobed shape and ramped structure appeared almost exactly as

they do today, and that there was no longer any visual evidence of limestone-slab rubble on the upper east and west lobes of the mound by that time. The picture was taken by C. L. Obst, Pittsfield, Illinois, from an adjoining bluff-top to the north.



Figure 14. Photograph of Naples-Russell Mound #8 taken for Judge Henderson ca. 1880 and sent by Henderson to the Smithsonian Institution. Photo labeled “Eagle Pipe Mound Pike Co. Ills.” (Photo reproduction courtesy of Anthropology Department, Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.).

Was Naples-Russell Mound #8 Specially Targeted by Early Diggers?

Yes and no. Obviously, the size and prominence of the mound (Naples 8 is easily the largest bluff-top mound in the lower Illinois Valley) made it especially noticeable to early residents and travelers, particularly since local farming practices in the nineteenth century involved clearing bluff-top areas for pasture. The Illinois River runs directly below the mound, which was likely a landmark for nineteenth century riverboat traffic, much like the “Pilot’s Peak” limestone bluff prominence that overlooks the river some 22 miles downstream. Naples 8 may also have been a landmark for the Philips Ferry crossing at Valley City, less than a mile to the north. For northbound travelers, Philips Ferry would have been the last bluff-base access from the river for almost 30 miles, since at this point the Illinois River moves away from the bluff base into the middle of a 10-mile-wide floodplain between Valley City and LaGrange.

On the other hand, archaeological surveys and excavation evidence from hundreds of other mounds in the lower Illinois Valley area (e.g., Farnsworth 2004) indicate that most of them have attracted similar scrutiny at one time or another, at first by casually curious residents and passers-by and more recently by dedicated artifact hunters. Widespread nineteenth-century mound explorations in the region reflect the intensity of early Euro-American fascination with (and curiosity about) the lives and artifacts of the Illinois Valley mound builders.

Thanks to a Mormon prophet and his followers in 1834, and a self-trained antiquarian scholar from Winchester in the 1870s, the surprising circumstance at Naples 8 seems to be the fact that results of two very early mound explorations there were actually written down.

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I am very grateful to Pete Bostrum for providing us with study access to information and artifacts from the Rohrkaste tunneling excavations in Naples 8, and to Wayne Hannant for making the pipe fragments he found on the disturbed upper surface of the mound in the mid-1950s available to us for study and photography.

The high-quality map illustrations accompanying this article were drafted by C.A.A. illustrator Liz Hansen during the early 1990s, and our maps and photographic illustrations were skillfully edited and adapted for use in the present article by ISAS Production Coordinator Angela Patton.

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